

Astrodome official snuffs out cigarette protest

By JERRY URBAN
Houston Chronicle

Houston City Councilman Dale Gorkzynski and several members of a health promotion group were stopped Sunday from demonstrating against a tobacco company on Astro-dome grounds.

The councilman and members of DOC (Doctors Ought to Care) were told to leave about 2:30 p.m. as they protested outside the Astrodome, where a Cinco de Mayo weekend celebration continued.

"We were not blocking anyone's entrance," Gorkzynski said. "I found it incredible that they had 15 to 20 security officers gathered around."

Gorkzynski, instrumental in City Council's recent resolution banning the sale of cigarettes in municipal buildings, said he felt that the group was on the verge of being arrested.

Michael Coakley, director of customer service and security for the Houston Sports Association, which holds a long-term lease on the Harris County-owned Astrodome, halted the demonstration.

HSA officials would not comment Sunday.

Dr. Alan Blum, chairman of DOC, said it was unclear why Coakley ordered a stop to the demonstration, which protested promotions set up on behalf of Camel cigarettes.

Blum accused R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., the cigarette's manufacturer, of targeting and "socializing" Hispanic children, associating the product with fun and entertainment and preparing them for tobacco use.

A Camel representative at the celebration would not comment.

"One of the most despicable things the cigarette industry is doing is targeting minorities and women," Gorkzynski said. "It made me sick to see one mother give a very small child a bunch of toys (sunglasses and tote bags with Camel promotions on them) that the Camel cigarette booth was giving out."

Friday in Washington, D.C., DOC will receive the American Medical Association's first award for distinguished achievement in adolescent health, said Blum, a Houston family practitioner and founder of the organization.

"I would like to think we are receiving this award because we were a group of doctors willing to make a fool of ourselves for many years before the cigarette issue was taken seriously," said Blum, 42, whose organization fights the promotion of products it deems unhealthy.

DOC, which has offices in Houston and Augusta, Ga., was founded in 1977 in Miami. It has about 5,000 members nationwide, including about 50 in Houston.

Tobacco products kill about 400,000 people in this country each year, about 100 times the number drugs kill, Blum said.

He added that the Astrodome demonstration, or what he calls a house call, was significant because Hispanic Americans are the fastest-rising smoking population in this

See PROTEST on Page 13A.



Buster Dean / Chronicle

Michael Coakley, left, director of customer service and security for the Houston Sports Association, tells Dr. Alan Blum, center, Hous-

ton Councilman Dale Gorkzynski and other smoking opponents Sunday they cannot demonstrate at the Astrodome.

Ex-officers safe, prison officials say

Fears blamed on Hollywood hype

By JERRY URBAN
Houston Chronicle

The repeated criminal convictions of peace officers have renewed concerns that they are faced with undue danger in prison. However, indications are that the justice system is adequately protecting them.

"That's Hollywood," said Harris County Assistant District Attorney Don Smyth, referring to the belief by many people that peace officers are in imminent danger when incarcerated. "That's James Cagney movies and Hollywood and TV, basically."

Attorneys who seek mercy for their clients claiming that putting them behind bars places them in inordinate danger are playing the role of super advocate and disregarding the realities of prison environment, said Smyth, who successfully prosecuted former Houston police Officer Alex Gonzales in the shooting death of Ida Lee Shaw Delaney.

"The system segregates them (former peace officers) and protects them," said Smyth, adding that attorneys "just want to get a jury to feel sorry for the guy and think that 'Oh, if he goes to the pen he'll be killed.'"

So should there be real concern for the safety of Gonzales, the 25-year-old former officer sentenced last week to seven years in state prison after being convicted of voluntary manslaughter? Or should there be for the three Sabine County law officers sentenced to prison late last week in the beating death of a black truck driver?

Gonzales remains out of jail on bond pending appeal. But, of course, the Gonzales family is worried.

"I believe in Jesus Christ," said Gonzales' father, Luis, when asked if he would worry about the safety of his son if he goes to prison. "I'm Christian, all my family is. Alex, too. The last word

See PRISON on Page 13A.

The struggle continues

Tiananmen Square survivor brings message to Houston

By LORI RODRIGUEZ
Houston Chronicle

Nearly a year has passed since Americans were riveted by the restless stirrings of hundreds of thousands of students on the campuses and streets of Beijing.

Jian-Li Yang was one of those students.

As a leader at China's Beijing Normal University, Yang found himself irresistibly drawn to the democratic movement that gradually roused millions of his Chinese countrymen to the possibilities of greater liberty.

It was a movement of free expression, open elections and a free press. It was a movement that has since toppled the Berlin Wall and energized Eastern Europe. But in spring 1989, the movement that pierced through the international consciousness like an echoing cry carried a different name.

It was called Tiananmen Square. Yang, in Houston Sunday to raise support for that movement, was one of the lucky ones. After protesting with the masses gathered in the square to oppose the entrenched communist regime and after watching thousands of students get gunned down by the People's Liberation



Jian-Li Yang, a Chinese democracy movement leader, now lives in the United States.

Army, Yang escaped to America.

"After the massacre at Tiananmen Square, I had two choices," said Yang. "I could stay in China and return to my hometown, where I would have been arrested. Or I could come to the America, and stay here. 'I'm glad I made this choice.'"

Once safely here, Yang, 26, tried to focus on his mathematics studies at the University of California at Berkeley. But Tiananmen Square had changed him. Watching his fellow students slain by soldiers had left its mark.

Today, Yang travels the country as president of the United States chapter of the Federation for a Democratic China. His mission: To raise support for a movement he believes will ultimately succeed.

"There is a lot of sympathy in China for the movement," says Yang, who has testified for the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in Washington. "The problem is how to organize the sympathy, how to organize the people."

Yang said that as dissident students in China made their way through the countryside to escape to America, they found support in places as unlikely as the higher ranks of the Communist Party and the humble homes of rural peasants.

"One of my friends stayed with the family of a high-ranking party official while he was escaping," said Yang. "He told me how the members of the family would wash his clothes by hand and how they tried to encourage him."

Another student told Yang of being on a bus stopped by police searching

for dissidents.

"Don't worry, the other people on the bus told him. 'We'll protect you,'" said Yang.

But the dark side of the days that have passed since Tiananmen Square is the greater repression by the Communist Party, which saw its supremacy challenged before the eyes of the world and did not like it.

Beijing is still under martial law, says Yang. Public gathering places like Tiananmen Square are blocked off. Students are rigorously monitored. Government investigators have visited Yang's hometown schools and questioned his brothers and sisters.

Still, Yang thinks the current communist regime is doomed.

"A totalitarian government is dependent on three things," said Yang. "One is a conviction that leads people to support the government just because they should. Another is a faith that convinces people to trust the government. And the third thing is terror."

"But since the massacre at Tiananmen Square, the people have lost their conviction and they have lost their faith. All the government has left is terror," Yang said.

"And when that fear dies out, the government will have lost everything. And it will collapse."

'Robin Hood' bill mulled for school finance

AUSTIN (AP) — Lawmakers working to reform the public school finance system are trying a new tactic to break their impasse with Gov. Bill Clements over his no-new-taxes pledge.

The House Public Education Committee has endorsed a bill that backers say would answer the Texas Supreme Court's order to make more money available to property-poor school districts — yet wouldn't necessarily require a tax increase.

The catch, lawmakers say, is that the "Robin Hood" measure could divert state money from rich school districts to poor ones if it becomes law without new revenue being added to education.

"The wealthier school districts would have a substantial loss in state aid," said Rep. Ernestine Glossbrenner, D-Alice, head of the Education Committee. Those districts would have to raise local property taxes or cut spending, she said.

Because the bill doesn't require additional appropriations in the 1990-91 school year, it would go straight to Clements if approved by lawmakers. Bills that directly spend money must stop at the comptroller's office to ensure the funds exist.

The move would prevent a rerun of last session, when Clements killed a \$555 million education bill simply by vetoing the half-cent sales tax increase needed to help pay for it.

Rep. James Hury, D-Galveston.

See LAWMAKERS on Page 13A.



John Davenport / Chronicle

Facial canvas

Tish Tydlacka uses 5-year-old Cynthia Gonzales' face for a mini-canvas Sunday during the sixth annual Very Special Arts Festival. The festival,

benefiting the physically and mentally challenged, was sponsored by the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County.

Despite calls to resign, Hartnett lands in runoff

By KEVIN MORAN
Houston Chronicle

GALVESTON — Mayor Pro Tem Pat Hartnett — the tension of his final week of campaigning intensified by black leaders seeking his resignation — made it into the May 26 runoff by placing third in a race for two at-large Galveston council seats.

The race was among numerous hard-fought municipal and school district elections decided over the weekend, including the Saturday night election of a dead woman as mayor of Hilshire Village.

In final unofficial returns from Galveston late Saturday, Hartnett received 2,109 of the 6,397 votes cast — 176 votes behind first-place finisher William C. "Bill" Clayton, a former Texas A&M University-Galveston president and first-time candidate for a city council seat.

Besides Clayton, 62, now a computer oceanography and meteorology consultant, Hartnett will campaign against real estate agent David Bowers, 36, and Mel Rourke, 50, a private investigator.

Bowers, who is also an attorney, received 2,042 votes to take fourth place in the runoff standings and



Hartnett

■ Results of area municipal and school district elections: Page 12A.

Rourke came in second with 2,203 votes. Physician Bill Meshel, 43, finished fifth with 1,302 votes.

Hartnett last week was blasted by the local NAACP and prominent black citizens for remarks made as he sought the endorsement of the Galveston Municipal Police Association.

Hartnett told officers the city needs to untie their hands and let them "come down hard" in a predominantly black area of the city that lies north of Broadway and stretches from 26th to 53rd streets.

"Somebody's got to come down hard sometime," Hartnett told the police. "And that's what it's going to take when you've got a minority situation like we've got on the north side of Broadway. That's the one thing they understand."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People called for his resignation. He later apologized for his remarks, saying he meant to call for a crackdown on dope dealers and other criminals — not honest minority group members. Still many black leaders had called for his defeat at the polls.

"I'm going to mend fences with the black community if they can be mended," he said Saturday night.

In Hilshire Village, the lone candi-

See ELECTION on Page 13A.